

a lot of concern. I didn't realize what happened until I looked in the mirror and my glasses cut my side of my face.

I feel great. I had good blood pressure last night, good blood pressure this morning.

Q. *[Inaudible].*

The President. Yes, yes. Anyway, going to have a great trip. Good to see you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks to Employees of John Deere Harvester Works in East Moline, Illinois

January 14, 2002

Thank you all very much. Thank you all. I thought for a while, when they told me that I was going to receive a gift here, that old Chuck was going to bring a pretzel—*[laughter]*—those kind that are easy to chew. *[Laughter]* If my mother is listening, Mother, I should have listened to you. Always chew your pretzels before you swallow. *[Laughter]* When I work the ropelines, people bring their children, and I always turn to the child, especially the teenagers, and say, “Listen to your mother. It’s the best advice I can give you.” I obviously needed to do the same thing last night.

But I’m feeling great and so honored to be here. Thank you very much for letting me come to this fantastic plant. I’m impressed by the size of these monsters. *[Laughter]* It kind of makes me think I need a bigger ranch. *[Laughter]*

I’m also impressed by the quality of the work. It’s a great tribute to the men and women who work the floor here, which is a great tribute to the country, that we’ve got such good workers, such an entrepreneurial spirit. And part of my job is to make sure we preserve that spirit.

It’s also an honor to be here on the Mississippi River. The river really links our country together, and so I’m going to start here, and then I’m going to go down to Missouri to talk to some farmers. And then I’m going to go down to New Orleans, to the Port of New Orleans, from whence your product and the products you help harvest leave our country for foreign markets.

It’s my way of doing a couple of things: one, reminding America about how important the food and fiber system is to our economy; reminding America that those who grow food and those who help the farmers harvest that food are an incredibly important part to the future of our country. The food and fiber industry represents \$1.3 trillion of gross domestic product in the year 2000. It employed over 24 million people.

I’m also here not only to remind people about the importance of food and fiber but to remind people that we need to make sure we create jobs in this country. And I’ve got some ideas I want to share with you on how we do just that. There’s no better place to do this than on the mighty Mississippi River.

I appreciate members of my Cabinet traveling with me, Secretary Evans and Secretary Veneman, both of whom are doing a fine job representing all segments of our society. I want to thank Members of the United States Congress who are here: Senator Harkin from Iowa, Senator Fitzgerald from Illinois, thank you both for being here. I appreciate a Member of the United States House, Lane Evans, who represents this district. And they must have changed the immigration laws because they let two Congressmen from Iowa in here. *[Laughter]* Congressman Gansky and Congressman Leach, thank you both for coming.

I appreciate the mayor of East Moline and the mayor of Moline for greeting me here today. Thank you both for coming. I want to thank the officers of John Deere. I want to thank Bob Lane and John Gault. And I want to thank Chuck Thompson and all the hard-working folks here at this plant. Thank you for greeting me. It’s my honor to be here.

The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create conditions in which jobs are created, in which people can find work. And I want to share with you some of my thoughts about how best to do that.

The first condition to make sure that people can find work is to make sure our Nation is secure, secure against an enemy that wants to attack us. That starts with having a robust, active, strong homeland security for our country.

People say, "What does that mean?" Well, it means any time you get a hint that somebody wants to harm us, you do something about it. It means you share intelligence with people all across the world, so that we know if somebody is coming our way. It means we've changed the nature of our law enforcement, so that preventing an attack is the number one priority of the FBI and local law enforcement. It means we're going to have our ears up and our eyes open. It means we'll be alert. And it means if we catch anybody trying to harm America or thinking about harming America, we're going to bring them to justice.

Bob mentioned the confidence of the American consumer, and there's no question the attacks on America on 9/11 have affected our confidence. But the more the American citizen realizes that our Federal Government in combination with State Government and local authorities are working day-in and day-out to prevent any other kind of attack, confidence will return.

But I want to remind my fellow citizens this, that the best way to secure the homeland of America is to find the enemy where they think they can hide and bring them to justice, no matter where they are. It's amazing to me that we've got an enemy, on the one hand, that's willing to convince young males to commit suicide on behalf of a cause that's empty and, at the same time, try to escape the justice of America in caves. They can run; they think they can hide. But this patient, strong Nation will stay on the job until we find them, rout them out, and get them.

I'm proud of our military. And for those of you who have got sons and daughters or brothers and sisters or moms and dads wearing the uniform, you need to be proud, too. They're accomplishing the mission that we set out, a mission that is dangerous, a mission that is just. After all, we are fighting for the freedoms: the freedom to live the life the way you want to, the freedom to worship the way you want to, and the chance for our children and our grandchildren to grow up in a peaceful and safe society.

The enemy made a mistake: They thought this Nation was soft. They thought because

we're a wealthy nation that we wouldn't rise to the occasion. Oh my, are they wrong.

A second way to make sure we've got sustained economic growth is to make sure our public school system works well. Recently, last week, I had the honor of traveling the country touting the fact that I was able to sign a good education bill. I know I shocked people when I stood up and said, "Ted Kennedy is all right." [Laughter] Probably shocked him more than anybody else. [Laughter]

But we showed what can happen in Washington when you put party politics aside and focus on what's good for the country. And what's good for the country is to make sure our education system produces smart, intelligent, literate children. And this bill I signed goes a long way for helping. It's a great piece of legislation, and I want to thank both Republicans and Democrats for working with me to get an education bill that America can be proud of.

I believe the third condition necessary to make sure people can find work and those who have work can work harder is to make sure that we open up the world for American products. Fearful people want to build walls around America; confident people believe we ought to tear them down. I'm confident in the American worker. I know the American worker can outproduce anybody, anywhere in the world. I'm confident in the American farmer. I know the American farmer is more efficient and can raise more crop than anybody, anywhere in the world. I'm confident we need to open up markets, not close them down. I'm confident we've got to get my friend Putin to be buying John Deere products. I'm confident what this Nation needs is to level the playing field and have trade that will create jobs all across America.

The fourth ingredient is to make sure we've got an energy supply as we head into the future. I oftentimes talk about how important it is to have—to be able to grow your own food. Part of the national security of the country is to know that we're self-sufficient when it comes to food production, that we can grow our own food, we don't have to rely upon another nation to feed our people. It's one of the luxuries this Nation has. We don't have the same luxury when it comes

to energy. We are too reliant upon foreign sources of crude oil. We've got to do a better job of not only conserving energy, but it seems to make sense to me that when we've got energy on our own hemisphere and in our own States, we ought to explore for it, to make us less reliant.

It's in the national security interests of our country to have an energy policy. And we need to get Congress to act on a good one. It's one that will make us less reliant. It's one that encourages more conservation. And it's one that's good for American workers and American jobs.

And finally, in order to make sure we have jobs, in order to make sure the economy expands, we've got to have good economic policy out of Washington, DC. I know there's a difference of opinion on about what's good economic policy, but mine starts with saying this: When the economy slows down, one of the best things we can do is let people keep their own money so they can spend it. If the economy slows down, one of the best answers is tax relief. It trusts local people to spend the money the way they want to see fit. If you have more money in your pocket, you buy more things, which encourages more production. Consumer demand is stimulated by tax relief. And the great thing about our society is when consumers demand, generally somebody's there to produce, and so there's more jobs as more production takes place.

Now, there's going to be a debate when we go back to Washington about tax relief. But I've made up my mind: The tax relief plan we passed, which you're now beginning to feel the effects of, is going to be permanent.

There are some more things that we can do. We need to take care of the workers whose lives were affected as a result of the evil ones' attacks, by extending unemployment benefits and by helping with their health care. I'm confident we can find common ground in Washington, DC, and a way to help people. But you know something? Americans don't want an unemployment check; Americans want a permanent paycheck, and that's got to be the mission of any good stimulus package.

So we need to work together to figure out ways to create stimulus: deductibility for

more equipment purchased, speeding up tax relief. There are some positive things we can do, if we make up our minds to do it, that will give a little extra oomph to an economic recovery that I hope is beginning to happen.

So those are some of the thoughts I wanted to share with you as I travel down the Mississippi River: Good stimulus policy, good economic policy based on trusting people with their own money, good education policy, good trade policy, and a good policy to bring these terrorists to justice.

You know, I am amazed that anybody would think they could attack the country. They just didn't understand us. But I understand the great strength of our country, and it's the people—it's the people that live all across our land. I don't care whether you're Democrat or Republican or independent, it's the people that make us great. You know why? Because this Nation is a nation of heart and soul and strength.

I am so pleased to hear the stories of moms and dads sitting around their dinner table, asking the fundamental question about life, people assessing their values: What's the most important thing in life? And moms and dads are realizing it's to love your children with all your heart and all your soul. No, the evil ones struck us, and they did serious damage. But in so doing, they really lifted the spirit of the country in a unique way. They brought out the very best in America.

The best in America takes place when somebody walks across the street and says to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help you?" Somebody knows there's somebody's shut in and says, "I think I'm going to go spread a little love today." The best of America takes place is in our churches and synagogues and mosques, when people walk out and listen to that call to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself, and then do something about it.

All this takes place, by the way—these millions of acts of kindness on a daily basis, which helps define the soul and spirit of America—it takes place not because of Government; it takes place because of the people of the greatest land on the face of the Earth.

My call to you is: Work hard like you do; love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself; love your children; tell them you

love them every single day; make sure they turn off the TV so they become good readers. [Laughter] And always remember that we're lucky to live in such a fabulous nation, the nation called America.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:03 a.m. on the factory floor of John Deere Harvester Works. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jose Moreno of East Moline; Mayor Stanley F. Leach of Moline, IL; Robert W. Lane, chairman and chief executive officer, Deere & Co.; John S. Gault, general manager, John Deere Harvester Works; Chuck Thompson, president, United Auto Workers Local 865; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Remarks in Springfield, Missouri

January 14, 2002

The President. Thank you all. I appreciate it. Thanks for coming. I thought the Senator—I thought the Senator was going to offer me a pretzel. [Laughter] Not one of those ones that are hard to chew. Now, I see a lot of the students who are here. This gives me a chance to give you some good advice: Always listen to your mother. [Laughter] Mine used to say, "Never swallow your pretzel until you've chewed it." [Laughter] I guess I wasn't listening.

But it's great to be back here in the great State of Missouri and Springfield. I want to thank the Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event. It gives me a chance to share some of my thoughts with our fellow citizens as I work my way down the heartland of America. I started earlier in Moline, Illinois, at a factory that makes John Deere tractors. I am here to talk to farmers. I'm on my way down to New Orleans to remind people that much of what we grow and produce in America is shipped overseas, out of that port. I'm really here to remind people of the great values of our country, lived in your everyday lives.

So I want to thank you all for coming. I'm grateful for a fine United States Senator and a good friend of mine, Kit Bond, for being here. Thank you for coming, Kit. I appreciate my Secretary of Commerce as well as the Secretary of Agriculture for joining me on this trip. Thank you both for coming. I want

to thank Kenny Hulshof and Todd Akin, of the United States Congress, for being here today. I want to thank those two fine Members of the House of Representatives for coming. I see my good friend Jim Talent is here. I appreciate you coming, Jim; I'm looking forward to visiting with you on the way out to the next stop. I want to thank so very much Roseann Blunt for being here, the wife of your Congressman. The first lady of your fine State met me at the airport, and I want to thank Lori Holden for coming out to say hello.

But most of all, I want to thank you all for taking time out of your day to be here to greet me. It's been an unbelievable experience to be your President.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Thank you. I'm so proud to come and be able to share some thoughts about how to make sure America remains strong and to make sure people who are trying to find work are able to do so. You know, my view about this is that the role of Government is not to try to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which people are willing to take risks, in which the entrepreneur is willing to expand through capital investment. The job of Government is to create an environment in which people are willing to create jobs, so people who want work can find work. And that starts with making sure our Nation is safe, in order to make sure—in order to make sure that there's confidence in our economy and that the environment is good for job creation.

My biggest job is to prevent the enemy from hitting us again, and that's exactly what I'm going to do. We take homeland security very seriously in America now. I put a good man in place, Tom Ridge, to make sure that any time we get any hint that anybody would try to harm America again, we'll act, and we'll act strong. If we get any scintilla of evidence that somebody may try to harm America, we will bring them to justice.

I want to thank the law enforcement officers and officials who are on alert. And we've got to remain on alert. You see something unusual happening in your community, contact the local law enforcement. We're on the look. But the truth of the matter is, the best